

REPORT ON INFORMATION COLLECTED CONCERNING APPLICANT

Under section 60835 of title 2 of the California Code of Regulations, the Bureau of State Audits is responsible for collecting information concerning applicants for the Citizens Redistricting Commission that is needed by the Applicant Review Panel to perform its responsibilities. This is a report by Bureau staff in compliance with that responsibility.

Name of Applicant: Gina Marie Simas.

Information: In the "Employment History" section of the supplemental application, Applicant stated that her last employment ended in October 2009, when she left a counsel position at the law firm of Bingham McCutchen, LLP. Bureau staff contacted Applicant to find out whether she had regained employment since that time. Applicant responded that she is still unemployed as she decided when she left her former employer that she wanted to take a year off from her busy job to travel and spend time with her family.

Staff found that Bingham McCutchen LLP is registered with the California Secretary of State's Office as a lobbying firm that engages in lobbying activities for its clients. It also operates a federal political action committee. However, Applicant is not registered as a lobbyist for the firm and is not listed as having contributed to the committee. When asked about her association with the firm's lobbying and political contribution activities, Applicant stated that she has never participated in the firm's lobbying efforts and has never contributed to its political action committee.

In her second essay answer on the supplemental application regarding ability to be impartial, and in the "Employment History" section of the supplemental application, Applicant reported that she worked as an intern for a member of the Assembly in the early 1990's but did not disclose for whom she interned. Staff asked Applicant about her experience, and Applicant responded that she interned for former Republican Assemblyman Dean Andal in 1992 and 1993. Applicant said she had reservations about providing the Assemblyman's name because he was controversial and did not have good relations with the Democratic Party. She claimed that she did not and does not share the same political ideology as the former Assemblyman, as she is more of a centrist. Applicant was worried that this affiliation would harm her chances of becoming a commission member, even though she does not concur with all the former Assemblyman's beliefs.

Staff discovered that Applicant's father, Ed Simas, had been an elected member of the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors for 12 years during the 1980's and 1990's, but is now retired.

Staff contacted Bruce Friedman, the author of one of Applicant's letters of recommendation, to confirm the information provided in the letter and receive any additional information that may be

relevant. Mr. Friedman confirmed that he wrote the letter of recommendation. Mr. Friedman praised Applicant's listening skills, and the ease with which Applicant is able to engage in discussions with people who hold opposing viewpoints. Mr. Friedman remarked that Applicant is an active conversationalist who freely shares her opinions, but is not doctrinaire, as she willingly acknowledges the viewpoints of others and works to facilitate group discussion. According to Mr. Friedman, one of Applicant's strengths is promoting compromise in contentious settings.

Recommendation: None.

Name and title of person submitting response: Steven Benito Russo, Chief of Investigations

Report Date: September 7, 2010